

Register of Historic Kansas Places

Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating individual properties and districts. The format is similar to the National Register of Historic Places form. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets. Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name St. Joseph's Catholic Church and Cemetery
 Other name/site number 061-0000-0004

2. Location

Street & number 13497 Lower McDowell Creek Road ☐ not for publication
 City or town Junction City ☐ vicinity
 State Kansas Code KS County Geary Code 061 Zip code 66441

3.,4. Certification

I hereby certify that this property is listed in the Register of Historic Kansas Places.



Patrick Zollner, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

8/17/09

Date

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
 (Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
 (Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
 (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>		buildings
<u>1</u>		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>2</u>		total

Name of related multiple property listing
 (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
 (Enter Categories from instructions)

Religion: Religious Facility

Funerary: Cemetery

Current Functions
 (Enter categories from instructions)

Vacant: Not in use

Funerary: Cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian: Gothic Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: Stone: Limestone

Walls: Stone: Limestone

Roof: Asphalt shingles

Other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the State Register)

- ☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☒ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

c. 1870-1910

Significant Dates

1870, 1910

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Unknown

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☒ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67)
has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

Kansas Historical Society

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3.57 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	1	4	7	0	4	1	4	5	4	3	2	4	9	5	0
Zone	Easting		Northing												
2															
3															
4															

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

Name/title Eric A. Stahl, member/Secretary of Board of Directors

Organization Geary County Historical Society Date 2/20/09

Street & number 223 W. Sixth St. Telephone (785) 762-5620

City or town Junction City State KS Zip code 66441

Property Owner

Name Geary County Historical Society

Street & number 530 N. Adams Telephone (785) 238-1666

City or town Junction City State KS Zip code 66441

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St. Joseph's Catholic Church & Cemetery
Geary County, KS

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

St. Joseph's Catholic Church and Cemetery are located in the McDowell Creek Valley in Geary County, 1.5 miles south of Interstate 70 and .15 mile east of Lower McDowell Creek Road. The picturesque valley stretches north and south and is home to several mid- and late-nineteenth century farmsteads and settlements. The church building faces south toward the ruins of a native limestone, one-room schoolhouse less than a half-mile south across the valley. The church cemetery sits on the east side of the church and contains roughly 180 graves.

St. Joseph's Church is a small, rural Gothic Revival-style church made of local materials (coursed limestone blocks). Character-defining features include Gothic-arch window openings and entrance, a central stone bell tower with Gothic-arch openings and crenellation, buttresses at the corners and along the side elevations, and a steeply pitched roof with cornice detailing at each end.

Exterior

The church is a one-and-a-half story limestone building; the outer walls, including the foundation and bell tower, are pitched face limestone blocks. Some of the joints retain historic beaded mortar joints. The square tower on the south side (main entrance) is approximately one-and-a-half times the height of the church. The gable roof is asphalt shingles.

Unless otherwise noted, all door and window openings feature Gothic arches. The tower has three round-arch openings with wood vent covers below the pointed arches.

The tower has crenellation around the top. A hip roof covers the bell tower, and a cross tops that roof. The bell has been removed.

Stone relief buttresses are at the centerline of the long dimension of the side walls (east and west sides). Incorporated buttresses are on the four corners of the sanctuary and in the front (south) corners of the tower base.

Holes developed in the roof, and weather coming in through the holes and through the window openings has caused some damage to the west wall plaster, west side floor and tin ceiling. The outside walls, masonry, foundation, and tower are all in good condition.

A small one-story section with a hipped roof comes off of the rear, northwest corner of the sanctuary proper. It is of the same pitched-face blocks, and includes two Gothic-arch windows and a wood door. There is a stone chimney on the rear of the main sanctuary (north side) and another pointed arch window (filled in with wood or metal) in the roof peak on this side.

After the church closed in 1989, the windows were removed and placed in the St. John Vianney Chapel just south of Maple Hill, Kansas. All windows had wood frames; some remain and some were damaged in the removal of the windows. The four east-facing and four west-facing sanctuary window openings once contained stained glass, but now contain no sashes and are boarded on the exterior to prevent

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damage to the interior from moisture, pests and rodents, and vandalism. The two windows in the rear addition, as well as the two south-facing sanctuary windows were mottled glass.

Interior

The interior consists of an open sanctuary space with a raised altar area at the north end; two small rooms adjoin the altar area (east and west of it) within the sanctuary. The ceiling of the sanctuary is pressed tin, mostly intact but damaged on the west side because of roof leaks (now covered by temporary materials pending a new roof). As noted, a small room comes off of the northwest corner of the main church building at the rear.

The building is not plumbed and there is no restroom facility. There may have been an outhouse on the property at one time, but it is no longer extant. A newspaper article suggests that electrical lines were extended to the church in 1945.

The sanctuary has a balcony over the main entrance, extending over approximately the rear one-third of the sanctuary. Access to the balcony is by an L-shaped set of wooden stairs with a landing at halfway up; these are in the southwest corner of the sanctuary. Wooden steps lead up from the balcony into the bell tower, through a door on the south side of the sanctuary (north wall of bell tower).

A basement is under the north one-quarter of the sanctuary; the furnace is here. Access is through a cellar door and concrete steps on the north side (rear) of the building. There are ground-level rectangular windows on the east and north sides.

The interior contents and fixtures of the church were auctioned in 1993. No interior pews, altars or railings remain. The remaining character-defining features include the wood floor and baseboards, tin ceilings, and plaster walls.

Cemetery (ca. 1870, contributing site)

The cemetery has burials dating from the 1870s to the present. There is a partial iron fence around the cemetery (southwest corner) and an iron entrance gate donated by the Brannick family in 1956. The name of the cemetery and a cross adorn the top of the gate. There are approximately 180 graves in the cemetery, which still receives burials. The cemetery grave markers range from simple unadorned headstones to elaborate family stones with religious motifs. There are a few family plots, but the majority of the cemetery contains rows organized loosely by family.

There is a large crucifix statue on a base just north of the church building, also donated in 1956 by the Brannick family.

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St. Joseph's Catholic Church & Cemetery
Geary County, KS

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

St. Joseph's Catholic Church and Cemetery are nominated to the Register of Historic Kansas Places under Criterion C for their architectural significance. Built in 1910, the church is an example of a small, rural Gothic Revival-style building constructed of local materials. The adjoining cemetery dates to 1870 and includes gravestones that reflect styles and trends popular from the late nineteenth century through the mid-twentieth century.

Elaboration¹

The McDowell Creek valley south of Manhattan and east of Junction City saw its first Euro-American settlers in the mid-1850s, just after the United States government opened the territory for settlement in 1854. The McDowell Creek area was attractive to early settlers because of the availability of timber and water. Early efforts to organize a community along McDowell Creek included the arrival of a group of settlers from Covington, Kentucky and Cincinnati, Ohio in 1855. They named their settlement Ashland and leaders included F. G. Adams, Reverend N. B. White, Henry J. Adams, C. N. Barclay, W. H. Mackay, John E. Ross, C. L. Sanford, William Stone, M. Weightman, and J. S. Williams. A post office was established at the Ashland colony and "in March of 1857 the town was made the county seat of Davis (now Geary) County."² By 1860, however, the county seat had relocated to Junction City and Ashland began to decline.³

Other settlements sprung up along the Kansas River to the north and various smaller tributaries such as Clarks Creek, Chapman Creek, Humboldt Creek, and Deep Creek. The Ashland Township is now part of Riley County and is just north of Geary County's Jackson Township where St. Joseph's Church is located.

Early Catholic missionary Father Louis Dumortier was influential in the founding of Catholic parishes throughout northeast and northcentral Kansas. "Operating out of St. Mary's Indian Mission, Father Dumortier's work on the Kansas frontier began in 1859 and continued until his death in July 1867."⁴ He served Catholics and helped form parishes in many Kansas communities including Chapman, Salina, Solomon, Fort Riley, St. George, and Alma.

¹ For additional historic context relating to the area's early settlement, see Sally F. Schwenk, Late 19th Century Vernacular Stone Houses in Manhattan, KS Multiple Property Documentation Form, National Register of Historic Places, 2008. Filed at the Kansas Historical Society and accessible online at <http://www.kshs.org/resource/mps.htm>.

² William G. Cutler, *History of the State of Kansas* (Chicago: Andreas' Publishing Company, 1883). Accessible online at www.kanecoll.org.

³ Frank Blackmar, *Kansas: A Cyclopedia of State History* (Chicago: Standard Publishing Company, 1912). Accessible online at <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/genweb/archives/1912/>.

⁴ Patrick Daniel Bolen and Edward M. Bolen, *St. Patrick's Mission Church and School National Register Nomination*, 1987. (Destroyed by tornado in 2008 and removed from the register.) Document filed at the Kansas Historical Society and accessible online at <http://khri.kansasgis.org/>. See also: Emory Lindquist, "Religion in Kansas During the Era of the Civil War," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 25 (Autumn 1959): 313-14; and M. Evangeline Thomas, "The Rev. Louis Dumortier, S.J., Itinerant Missionary to Central Kansas, 1859-1867," *Kansas Historical Quarterly* 20 (November 1952): 252.

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St. Joseph's Catholic Church & Cemetery
Geary County, KS

Father Dumortier led masses and performed baptisms in McDowell Creek valley before any church buildings were erected. Irish Catholics were prominent among the early settlers in the McDowell Creek valley. The names on the gravestones in St. Joseph's Cemetery document this early Irish influence with names such as Tully, Ryan, Waters, Brannick, Toy, O'Neill, Neary, and O'Hara.

James Ryan and his wife are listed in the 1855 census of the area. In 1870, the Ryans donated 3.57 acres of land for the erection of a church building and creation of a cemetery. A stone and wood church was completed in 1872 and had a value of \$700. Early settler and stonemason Michael Brannick helped erect this first church building and several other native limestone buildings in McDowell Creek Valley.

In the spring of 1910, the 1870 church building was torn down and replaced by the current larger building. Some of the stone from the original building was salvaged and re-used in the construction of the 1910 building. Father Reade conducted the first services in the new church in October 1910. Memorial stained glass windows honored some of the valley's original families: Ryan, Brannick, O'Neill, Bostick, Boller, Burns, Briggs, Toy, Dunn, Broderick, Schippert and Black. These windows have been removed and are now located in a newer church building - St. John Vianney Chapel just south of Maple Hill, Kansas. Descendents of some of these early families still call the valley home, and evidence of their long history in the valley is visible on road signs and mailboxes up and down Lower McDowell Creek Road.

The church remained open for 79 years, closing in 1989 due to a shrinking number of parishioners. The church served important religious and social functions for the community including masses, weddings, funerals, baptisms, and confirmations. St. Joseph's Catholic Church was a mission church served by the priest from St. Patrick's in Ogden.

By 1970, only eighteen "souls" from six families were attending services at St. Joseph's. The church was closed on June 30, 1989, and the members dispersed to other area Catholic churches, particularly St. Xavier's in Junction City. On July 18, 1993, the contents and fixtures were auctioned off. Sometime later, the stained glass windows were removed and re-installed in a new Catholic church - St. John Vianney Chapel just south of Maple Hill, Kansas.

In the fall of 2008, the Geary County Historical Society in Junction City obtained title to the church and cemetery property from the Salina Diocese. Temporary repairs to the roof have been made, and the windows and doors secured against weather damage and vandalism. Priorities for the Geary county Historical Society are a new roof and repairs to the tin ceiling, plaster and flooring.

The Geary County Historical Society intends to use the restored building as a museum to preserve the history of the McDowell Creek community and the church itself, and to again serve as a community social center.

Architectural Significance

The Gothic Revival style was commonly used for church architecture in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The style has roots in England where Gothic traditions influenced church architecture beginning in the Middle Ages. Gothic Revival architecture gained prominence in the United States

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St. Joseph's Catholic Church & Cemetery
Geary County, KS

during the mid-nineteenth century through designs of well-known architects Alexander Jackson Davis, Andrew Jackson Downing, and Richard Upjohn.⁵

St. Joseph's Church follows in this tradition of Gothic Revival-style church architecture. Defining features of the style include its Gothic-arch window and door openings and crenellated bell tower. The building is an example of the Gothic Revival style executed on a small, rural turn-of-the-century church building.

The adjacent cemetery contains approximately 180 burials marked with various styles of markers. As historian David Charles Slone notes in his book *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History*, "religious distinction among cemeteries diminished" during the early twentieth century.⁶ This is consistent with St. Joseph's Cemetery, which reflects patterns consistent with other rural cemeteries of the early twentieth century including grave markers that range from simple unadorned headstones to elaborate family stones with religious motifs. There are a few family plots, but the majority of the cemetery contains rows organized loosely by family.

⁵ Phoebe B. Stanton, *The Gothic Revival and American Church Architecture: An Episode in Taste, 1840-1856* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1968).

⁶ David Charles Slone, *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 9.

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St. Joseph's Catholic Church & Cemetery
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Junction City, Kansas *Union*, March 18, April 15, and July 8, 1910.

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Slagg, Winifred N. *Riley County, Kansas*. Manhattan, KS: published by author, 1968.

Sloane, David Charles. *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991.

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St. Joseph's Catholic Church & Cemetery
Geary County, KS

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Stanton, Phoebe B. *The Gothic Revival and American Church Architecture: An Episode in Taste, 1840-1856* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1968).

Thomas, Sister M. Evangeline. "The Rev. Louis Dumortier, S. J., Itinerant Missionary to Central Kansas, 1859-1867," *Kansas Historical Quarterly*, v. 20 (November, 1952), p. 269.

"Tully, 1831 – 1991" Family history by Mary Brabb Tully, in research materials at Geary Co. Historical Society.

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Section Number 10 & Photos Page 8

St. Joseph's Catholic Church & Cemetery
Geary County, KS

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property includes the St. Joseph's Church and Cemetery, which is located at 13497 Lower McDowell Creek Road in Section 34, Township 11, Range 07 in the vicinity of Junction City, Geary County, Kansas and described as follows: POB 21 N SW COR NE ¼ E 445 NW 500 SW 235 S 309 TO POB. The nominated area is 3.57 acres and includes the former church building and adjacent cemetery.

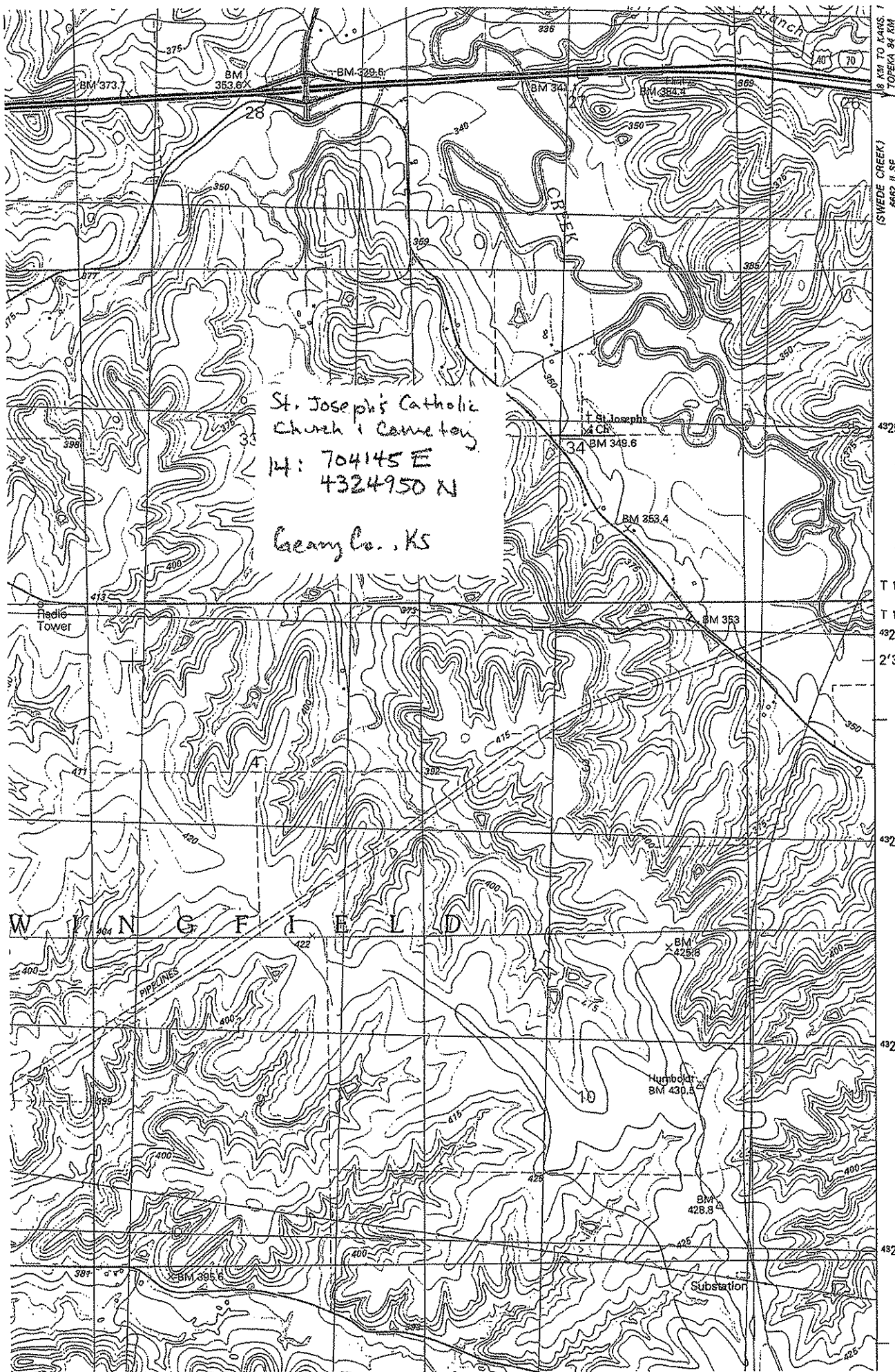
BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property includes the land historically associated with the St. Joseph Church and Cemetery.

PHOTOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Property Name: St. Joseph's Church and Cemetery
Location: 13497 Lower McDowell Creek Road, Geary County, KS
Photographer: Sarah Martin
Date: 2 April 2009

Photo 1: Church and cemetery from Lower McDowell Creek Road, facing NE
Photo 2: South (front) and west (side) elevations, facing NE
Photo 3: East (side) elevation, facing W
Photo 4: North (rear) elevation, facing S
Photo 5: Entrance to cemetery, facing N
Photo 6: Interior, sanctuary, facing S
Photo 7: Interior, sanctuary, facing N
Photo 8: Interior, sanctuary, showing raised stage, facing NW
Photo 9: Interior, sanctuary, showing raised stage, facing NE
Photo 10: Interior, close-up of boarded window



Feet	Meters
1	3.048
2	6.096
3	9.144
4	12.192
5	15.240
6	18.288
7	21.336
8	24.384
9	27.432
10	30.480

To convert feet to meters
 multiply by .3048

To convert meters to feet
 multiply by 3.2808